



H.B. 6662 “AN ACT IMPLEMENTING THE GOVERNOR'S BUDGET RECOMMENDATIONS CONCERNING EDUCATION.”

February 21, 2023

Senator Douglas McCrory
Representative Jeffrey Currey
Members of the Education Committee
Legislative Office Building, Room 3100
Hartford, CT 06106

To: Senator Douglas McCrory, Representative Jeffrey Currey and members of the Education Committee:

The Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents (CAPSS), which represents the superintendents of Connecticut’s public schools and over a hundred other executive district leaders, would like to share its comments about the education portions of this bill:

H.B. 6662 “AN ACT IMPLEMENTING THE GOVERNOR'S BUDGET RECOMMENDATIONS CONCERNING EDUCATION.”

While CAPSS acknowledges that Governor Lamont’s proposed FY 2023-25 biennial budget sustains and improves Connecticut’s public education system, we believe H.B. 5003 is a better alternative and we advocate for all districts to receive increases in ECS funding. In January 2023, CAPSS updated its [Public Policy Agenda & Blueprint Update 2023](#). This bill provides the legislative changes needed to implement the Department of Education and Office of Early Childhood’s budgets.

We believe it is helpful to contextualize our comments about the budget with the [Public Policy Agenda & Blueprint](#). Details follow below.

Capping Department of Education Grants

For many years, the Excess Cost Grant was capped at \$140 million, even as the percentage of students identified as requiring Special Education services increased from 14.5% of all students in FY 2018 to 16.3% of all students in FY 2022. This year, an additional \$16 million, was added to the grant. This \$156 million, which is a welcome

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increase, is capped at that level in Governor Lamont's proposed budgets for FY 2023-24 and FY 2024-25. The Agenda & Blueprint recommends full funding for Excess Costs which would require an increase of the grant to \$180 million in FY 2023-24 and \$182 million in FY 2024-25.

Additionally, the Agenda & Blueprint recommends reinstating the Transportation grant which has not been funded for years. Although the budget does not restore the funding, a new version of the Transportation Grant, (albeit limited to districts with transportation overburdens) is warranted.

Additional Funding for Preschool and Universal Preschool For Alliance Districts

The Agenda & Blueprint recommends additional funding for State-funded preschool and universal preschool for students living in Alliance Districts in order to "help restore and improve academic achievement." In the proposed budget, two major programs, Child Day Care and School Readiness (found mostly in disadvantaged communities including Alliance Districts) will have their annual per child rates increased to \$10,500 in FY 2024-25 at an additional cost of \$15.5 million annually. This bill would implement these rate increases which align with the Agenda & Blueprint.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Fran Rabinowitz".

Fran Rabinowitz

Executive Director

Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents